



Salton Sea Management Program

All Committees Meeting Summary

Held October 4, 2017 – Coachella

Prepared by the Consensus Building Institute

Meeting in Brief

Approximately 65 people attended the All Committees meeting on Oct. 4, 2017, in Coachella. The purpose was to update all stakeholders engaged in advising the State on its Salton Sea Management Program. The State presented its draft Work Plan for implementing the 10-Year Plan and received questions and feedback from Committee and public stakeholders. The Work Plan outlines Phase 1 project elements related to hydrology, air quality, and habitat and plans for restoration project design in New River West, Alamo River North, and Whitewater River area. The State has requested comments via email by Oct. 27, 2017. The State Water Resources Control Board has a Draft Stipulated Order related to the Salton Sea. The Natural Resources Agency will integrate milestones on restored acres and the no-less-than 50% habitat requirement into the State’s Work Plan.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife and California Air Resources Board shared monitoring results on air quality and wildlife/habitat at the Sea. The Torres Martinez (near Whitewater River) wetland is mostly complete. The New River East design is complete and is waiting for easement approval. New River West is under design. Red Hill Bay is under construction. The California Department of Water Resources also described the water supply and demand assessment process that is necessary to ensure water will be available for restoration projects.

The State’s advisory committee process is moving forward with committees meeting in fall and winter to identify meeting topics and committee composition.

Action Items

Timeline	Who	What
10/27/2017	All Committees	Provide comments to State’s Draft Work Plan to implement SSMP 10-Year Plan to saltonsea@water.ca.gov -- note in subject line “Comments on Draft Work Plan”
10/13/2017	NRA	Meeting Follow up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share information on list serve sign up - Post water supply and demand memo - Post monitoring presentation from meeting

Stipulated Order and Draft Work Plan for 10-Year Management Plan

Imperial Irrigation District, Imperial County and San Diego County Water Authority have developed in cooperation with State and advocacy groups a draft [Stipulated Water Board Order](#), which is available on the State Board web site. The Stipulated Order recognizes the effort necessary to manage a smaller, but sustainable Salton Sea to protect public health and the environment. The Order declares that the State of California will lead and coordinate management and calls for cooperation with all affected entities. It sets restoration milestones in terms of acres and will require that at least 50% of

restored acreage shall provide habitat benefits for fish and wildlife. The Stipulated Order is currently draft, and the State Water Board is accepting comments.

The State presented its draft Work Plan for review and input by the Advisory Committees. The Work Plan is a management tool to allow the State to coordinate across agencies, bridging design concepts to Phase 1 action. Overarching project development tasks, between now and mid-2018 include hydrology, water quality for new habitat creation, habitat planning and design, air quality management planning, and environmental compliance requirements. The State is also assessing and managing compatibility with other regional planning documents. Priority project areas include New River West, Alamo River, and Whitewater River Area design by December 2018.

The Work Plan and the State's full presentation is available on CNRA's website.

<http://resources.ca.gov/salton-sea/>

Discussion and Feedback – Work Plan

Participants shared the following **suggestions** and **comments** regarding the proposed Work Plan.

Overall Integration and Accountability

- Integrate with requirements of QSA JPA and Draft Stipulated Order
- Include dates, quantifiable goals, and cost estimates in Work Plan
- Clarify roles and accountability mechanisms
- Simplify and prioritize immediate needs

Air Quality

- Include plans to monitor and mitigate emissive areas
- Incorporate monitoring of human health by zip code and population
- Prioritize projects by proximity to where people live

Aquatic Habitat and Water Quality

- Track contaminants including but not limited to selenium
- Ensure project life spans are considered in light of degraded water quality
- Define habitat as aquatic habitat since that is primarily what it is

Monitoring

- Suggest using Science Committee for peer review of monitoring proposals Monitoring should not be done in isolation; ask 'so what' before conducting studies
- Report findings to the public

Note: The Science Committee will not function as a regulatory review and will only review the various processes for scientific practices

Next Steps – Comments due by Oct. 27, 2017

The State welcomes comments and feedback on the draft Work Plan. The deadline for comments is Oct. 27, 2017. Send comments to: saltonsea@water.ca.gov and note in the subject line "comments on draft Work Plan."

Monitoring, Hydrology, and Project Updates

The presentations and information are posted at the CNRA web site, unless otherwise noted:

<http://resources.ca.gov/salton-sea/>

Wildlife/Habitat Monitoring – California Department of Fish and Wildlife

- Bird and fisheries monitoring update with summer 2017 data.

Air Quality Monitoring – California Air Resources Board

- Testing stations and UC Riverside work.
- IID air quality program

Water Supply and Demand for SSMP Projects – California Department of Water Resources

- The goal of this effort is to determine water availability to support 10-year plan implementation.
- The effort attempts to match water supply to water demand. Supply uses current levels, future projects via the WEAP model (which considers changes in land use, population, farming practices, and climate), and Sea elevation, salinity, and playa exposure via the SALSA2 model.
- DWR has prepared a memo outlining the approach, which will be posted at either the CNRA site <http://resources.ca.gov/salton-sea/> or DWR's site <http://www.water.ca.gov/saltonsea/>

Project Updates – California Department of Water Resources

New River East

- Design package is complete.
- Easement access pending. Once easement is signed, DWR anticipates several months for bid advertisement, award and contract development, and 18-24 months for construction.
- Developing contract with IID to clear site before bird-nesting season.

New River West

- Design-build package is being prepared.

Red Hill Bay

- 530 acres brackish habitat.
- Construction started in 2016.
- Berm 1 under construction.
- All earth work to be roughed in by end of 2017.
- Complications: not easy to build on Sea sediments.

Torres Martinez Wetland Solar

- 47 acres near Whitewater River.
- Solar energy array installed to power pumps.
- Final inspection scheduled Oct. 6, 2017.
- Ready to turn on pumps.
- The Torres Martinez Tribe will have a special cultural process for opening the project.

Other Project Notes

- DWR is pursuing easements project-by-project, but hopes to create a standardized process.

Refined Advisory Committee Structure and 2018 Meeting Framework

CBI facilitators presented a refined committee structure and proposed meeting framework based on input received prior to the last the last All-Committees Meeting in June 2017. The committee

structure will move forward with the following committees: outreach, 10-year plan, science, air quality, and long-range. The purpose of the committees is to provide advice and feedback to the State's program. In addition, CBI and the State requested that participants review and provide feedback on meeting topics for 2018, as the State wants to create opportunities for discussing topics of importance to committee members. The advisory committee presentation is **available on the CNRA website** at <http://resources.ca.gov/salton-sea/>.

Feedback Regarding Refined Committee Structure, Meeting Framework, and Communications

- More and better notification of meetings and meeting materials, e.g., on website, by email, and via list serves (and request to CBI to circulate Salton Sea listserv links)
- Ensure committees have *meaningful advisory* role in developing SSMP plans and projects
- Create mechanisms to share information *among* committees (e.g., cross membership)
- Ensure committees have clear targets so we all know what committees are working on what and when
- On meeting announcements and agendas, include prominent links to meeting materials with clear description/title and relevant deadlines
- Hold some All-Committees meetings in Imperial County; 10 or 11am start time helps those traveling
- Request detailed updates to Water Board, e.g., today's presentations given the stipulated order
- Concern expressed that committee members may have a conflict of interest if they own business or have interest in particular project or solution.
- Express concern about the overlap between the air quality committee (coordinating regulation) and science committee (integrating new research)

Next Steps

- Share list serve information so people can sign up.
- Provide notices to list serve when web site has updates and improve public notice of the committee meetings.
- Each committee will review its membership and agenda topics for 2018.
- Plan 2018 committee meetings.

Long Range Committee

The Long Range Committee met Oct. 3. The Committee is planning a forum sometime in December to accept ideas. The Committee is considering a two-tiered process in which a project proponent would submit and executive summary and checklist. The Committee would then evaluate whether it merited a full proposal. In addition, the Committee will be working to develop the long-range plan in the next few years. Several committee participants articulated the importance of having a longer-term vision for the plan.

Meeting Presenters

Jack Crayon, CDFW
Phillip Johnson, Salton Sea Authority
Vivien Maisoneuve, DWR

Laura Peters, DWR
Ruey-Wen Wang, DWR
Earl Withycombe, CARB

Facilitators: CBI Facilitators Gina Bartlett, gina@cbuilding.org, 415-271-0049 and Ryan Golten, rgolten@cbuilding.org, 303-880-9521.